

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended): A process for the preparation of tetrasubstituted ureas ~~comprising: by reaction of the corresponding amines with phosgene in the presence of an aqueous inorganic base at a temperature in the range from 0 to 150° C, which comprises~~

reacting, in a reaction apparatus, at least one corresponding amine with phosgene in the presence of an aqueous inorganic base at a temperature in the range of from 0° C to 150° C, said process further comprising:

feeding the at least one corresponding amine, the phosgene and the aqueous inorganic base on average continuously to the reaction apparatus,

forming a two-phase system in the reaction apparatus through the choice of:
(i) the tetrasubstituted ureas to be prepared;
(ii) ~~through~~ the mixing ratios of the substances and substance mixtures to be fed in;
(iii) ~~through~~ the temperature during the reaction; and, optionally
(iv) ~~where appropriate, through~~ the feed of an organic solvent which is not completely miscible with water; and

discharging the reaction mixture on average continuously from the reaction apparatus.
2. (currently amended): The A process according to ~~as claimed in~~ claim 1, wherein the tetrasubstituted ureas to be prepared have a solubility in water of ≤ 10 g/l of water, measured at 25° C and atmospheric pressure.
3. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in either of claims 1 and 2,~~ wherein the tetrasubstituted ureas to be prepared have a melting point of $\leq 150^\circ$ C.
4. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3,~~ wherein the aqueous inorganic base ~~employed is an aqueous inorganic base which~~ has a lower pK_b value, measured at 25° C in aqueous solution, than the corresponding amine.
5. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any one of claim 1 to 4,~~ wherein the aqueous inorganic base ~~employed is~~ comprises at least one base selected from the group consisting of aqueous sodium hydroxide solution and/or aqueous potassium hydroxide solution.
6. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5,~~ wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure in the range from 0.05 MPa to 1.0 MPa.

7. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the reaction is carried out in a stirred-tank reactor.
8. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the reaction is carried out in a cascade of at least two stirred-tank reactors.
9. (currently amended): The A process according to claims 7 or 8 as claimed in either of claims 7 and 8, wherein part of the reaction mixture is discharged from a the region close to the liquid surface of the reaction mixture and a further part of the reaction mixture is discharged from a the region close to the bottom of the stirred-tank reactor or reactors.
10. (currently amended): The A process according to claim 1 as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein ~~the tetrasubstituted ureas prepared~~ the process results in the preparation of at least one tetrasubstituted urea selected from the group consisting of ~~are~~ N,N,N', N'-tetrabutylurea, N,N'-dimethylethyleneurea, and/or N,N'-dimethylpropyleneurea.
11. (new): The process according to claim 2, wherein the tetrasubstituted ureas to be prepared have a melting point of $\leq 150^{\circ}\text{C}$.
12. (new): The process according to claim 2, wherein the aqueous inorganic base has a lower pK_b value, measured at 25°C in aqueous solution, than the corresponding amine.
13. (new): The process according to claim 3, wherein the aqueous inorganic base has a lower pK_b value, measured at 25°C in aqueous solution, than the corresponding amine.
14. (new): The process according to claim 11, wherein the aqueous inorganic base has a lower pK_b value, measured at 25°C in aqueous solution, than the corresponding amine.
15. (new): The process according to claim 2, wherein the aqueous inorganic base comprises at least one base selected from the group consisting of aqueous sodium hydroxide solution and aqueous potassium hydroxide solution.
16. (new): The process according to claim 3, wherein the aqueous inorganic base comprises at least one base selected from the group consisting of aqueous sodium hydroxide solution and aqueous potassium hydroxide solution.
17. (new): The process according to claim 4, wherein the aqueous inorganic base comprises at least one base selected from the group consisting of aqueous sodium hydroxide solution and aqueous potassium hydroxide solution.

18. (new): The process according to claim 2, wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure in the range from 0.05 MPa to 1.0 MPa.
19. (new): The process according to claim 3, wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure in the range from 0.05 MPa to 1.0 MPa.
20. (new): The process according to claim 4, wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure in the range from 0.05 MPa to 1.0 MPa.